

Next year's vote on CAFTA will also set the stage for the many free trade agreements that are lining up to pass through Congress: Morocco, Australia, the Dominican Republic, South Africa, Bahrain. The list just keeps growing.

To keep our trade agenda moving forward, we need a CAFTA that can pass with a large majority. If CAFTA sours the Congress on FTAs we are in for real trouble.

With only 4 months left in the negotiations, time is running short. But there is still time enough to push the CAFTA negotiations in the right direction. We can do that by addressing three principal concerns:

First, there needs to be a clear acknowledgment by our negotiators that CAFTA presents different challenges than other agreements. These countries have different political, legal, and social structures, and different economies, than any of our existing FTA partners.

We cannot simply table the Singapore and Chile texts and say we are done. Not for market access or agriculture. Not for services and intellectual property. Not for environment or labor. One size does not fit all.

Second, we need to make sure that this agreement is comprehensive. Taken together, the CAFTA countries are about our 18th largest trading partner. They account for one percent of U.S. trade. So the commercial benefits from this agreement will be modest at best.

Absent significant commercial gains, the only way to "sell" the CAFTA to our farmers, workers, and businesses, is as a strong model for future agreements.

We hear from Costa Rica that they don't want a telecom chapter in the agreement. This is a bad precedent.

Similarly, we can't allow ourselves to go too far down the path of "non-reciprocal" market access provisions for developing countries, just to get an agreement done.

Given their reluctance to tackle hard issues in the FTA negotiations and the recent actions of some of the CAFTA countries in Cancun, I am frankly skeptical about where the CAFTA negotiations are headed. If we, and the CAFTA countries, are not prepared to conclude a comprehensive agreement, we need to ask ourselves if this agreement is worth negotiating at all.

Third, we need to do more to address legitimate concerns about environment and labor.

Any number of objective sources have pointed out deficiencies in the environmental and labor laws of the various CAFTA countries.

And there is widespread agreement including among the CAFTA governments themselves—that these countries lack the capacity to effectively enforce their own environmental and labor laws.

Yet that is just what the text tabled by USTR would require them to do. Even as the evidence mounts, our nego-

tiators stick stubbornly to their determination not to go beyond the Chile and Singapore texts.

That won't work. For CAFTA, we need a different approach.

To date, our domestic politics on environment and labor have been polarized. The CAFTA countries see that and they use it as an excuse not to engage constructively.

I want to help break this deadlock. I want to get us all talking about constructive ways to address environment and labor.

A workable approach to environment and labor in the CAFTA will do two things. It will help the CAFTA countries overcome their capacity limitations. And it will give assurance that meaningful improvements in environmental and labor standards and enforcement in those countries are occurring.

In the next weeks, I plan to release a detailed proposal for addressing environmental issues in the CAFTA. I will give just a short preview today.

My proposal combines improvements to the Chile and Singapore environment chapter text with enhancements to the trade capacity building and environmental cooperation programs.

In the text, I propose changes that will help build an open and responsive system of environmental regulation in the CAFTA countries. For example, the citizen petition process used in the NAFTA side agreement has helped empower environmental NGOs in Mexico, with positive effects. I think that should be a model for the CAFTA.

On trade capacity building, I think we can make this process work better to achieve long-term environmental and sustainable development goals. On the U.S. side, that means creating a mechanism that assures funding for capacity building over the long term.

For the CAFTA countries, it means completing the ongoing regional process of setting environmental priorities, and establishing a monitoring system to assure that capacity building is leading to progress toward those goals.

I look forward to sharing my detailed proposal in the near future.

It does not serve America's trade interests to negotiate imperfect trade agreements simply to put another notch on our belt.

I hear people say all the time that America has fallen behind other countries in negotiating FTAs and needs to "catch up." But this is not a numbers game. We must always remember that it is the quality, not the quantity, of our free trade agreements that matters.

I hope that I will be able to work with the administration to pass a good agreement with Central America. It is an important region, and this could be a significant agreement.

But the Trade Act—and specifically the provisions on labor and environment—must be adhered to. Submitting the same labor and environment text for all agreements—regardless of the

situation in that country—is not, in my view, consistent with the Trade Act.

If we end up with an agreement that ignores Members' concerns on labor and the environment, I will work hard against it.

I hope it does not come to that. I hope that we can work together on an agreement that makes sense and moves the ball forward. And I stand ready to do that.

COLLAPSE OF THE WTO MINISTERIAL

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about next steps for our trade agenda after last week's collapse of the World Trade Organization Ministerial in Cancun.

Certainly, the WTO is not dead. In fact, this kind of setback is fairly common in its history. Sooner or later the negotiators pick up the pieces and get back to work. We must and we will continue to try to get the Doha round negotiations back on track. And eventually, I think we will succeed.

But it probably won't happen soon.

In the meantime, we need to learn from last week's events and adjust our national trade strategy accordingly. In my view, there are two important lessons to be learned.

First, we can't count on a sweeping WTO agreement to be an engine of economic growth for our country any time soon. The President has made the stimulative effect of a strong WTO agreement a centerpiece of his plan for economic recovery and long-term growth. If we want to stimulate the economy through trade—and I certainly support that goal—then we need a new plan.

Second, the administration needs to rethink its strategy for picking FTA partners. I have heard many times that we need FTA partners who will be allies in the WTO and help the United States move that process forward. Instead, many of the same countries who are negotiating FTAs with us joined the G-21 and helped deadlock the ministerial.

So where do we go next?

To begin, I don't think we should overreact. Punishing trading partners with whom we have differences of opinion is not likely to be productive in the long term.

That doesn't mean they get a free pass. To the contrary, the onus is very much on Costa Rica, South Africa, Guatemala, and the others to take significant, constructive steps right now to show that they take their FTA negotiations seriously and are committed to comprehensive agreements with the United States. Where they have been holding back in FTA talks, they need to start putting more on the table. And if they don't, they should realize we have other countries to look to.

At the same time, we need to think hard about how to use trade agreements to create economic alternatives to the WTO. American workers, farmers, and businesses have just suffered a

big setback. They will not see the economic benefits of the Doha round for a long time. We need to focus our negotiating resources on bilateral and regional deals that can provide real commercial opportunities in the short term. That means, in picking FTAs, we need to give less weight to foreign policy and more weight to economic policy.

Access to the large and vibrant U.S. market remains our best leverage in opening markets around the world. We must continue to use that leverage well.

I am disappointed in the outcome of Cancun. Like all disappointments, however, it offers lessons for the future. I hope we will learn those lessons and apply them to our trade agenda as we move forward.

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, the focus of National Public Lands Day, 2003, is to improve and conserve our Nation's forests, grasslands, plains, rivers, streams and wetlands. As last year, we can expect tens of thousands of volunteers to join our dedicated land managers in projects across the country to protect America's rich natural resources and improve our opportunities to enjoy them.

Year and year National Public Lands Day volunteers are maintaining the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps, CCC, who exemplified land stewardship through the thirties and into the forties. National Public Lands Day continues to serve, as did the CCCs, to build a sense of ownership for our public lands. I believe this land stewardship and sense of ownership are most critical today as many changes are occurring which are affecting our public lands. I would like to spend just a few minutes to discuss these changes, how they are affecting our public lands and what we are, and can be, doing to address these impacts.

Our first concern is fire and fuels. Many of you are well aware of the catastrophic wildfires that have been occurring across the country over the past several years. This is a direct result of changing forest conditions that have led to a large build-up of fuels. Through legislated authorities such as Stewardship Contracting, communities are working with resource professionals and private contractors to address this situation while providing jobs, products and local income. We need to continue this work together to thin our forests, reduce hazardous fuels and restore the landscape to a more balanced condition. We need to continue to work together to provide more defensible space around our communities. Through legislation such as the Healthy Forest Initiative we can facilitate such projects that will protect our communities, our watershed and other at-risk lands. By continuing to work together we can address these hazardous conditions with win-win solutions.

The introduction and spread of unwanted invasive species is another concern. Noxious weeds, non-native fish species and introduced insects are just a few examples of invasive species that can wreak havoc on our public lands and across all ownerships. Throughout the country, local governments, private landowners and public land managers are working together to build strategies and share resources to combat invasive species across broad landscapes. Working together we can develop prevention plans to keep unwanted species out and control plans to reduce or eradicate unwanted species that have already arrived. Working together we can ensure that our public lands will remain healthy habitats for the plants and animals that enrich our lives.

Another concern is that, across the country, farms, ranches and other large tracts of open land are disappearing. These open spaces are being converted into neighborhoods, shopping malls and commercial complexes. In many respects these developments bring progress and benefits. In other ways these changes are creating a ripple effect on our public lands. Uses that were once spread across open lands owned by many are now being concentrated on the open lands remaining—Public Lands. Working together we can address these issues by considering these effects prior to development. Working together we can anticipate the increased demands such development will have on public lands and prepare our land managers to meet those demands. Working together we can find ways to promote development and protect our public lands.

Our last major concern is unmanaged outdoor recreation. Americans are hard working, but in our time off we like to play as hard as we work. More and more, many of us like to recreate on our Nation's public lands. As a result the numbers of recreationists and types of recreational activities are increasing at a staggering rate. This is creating a situation that leaves land managers struggling to keep up and the public frustrated with unmet expectations. To help with this situation, across the country, volunteers, user groups and resource professionals are working together to provide trail systems that provide high quality, safe experiences for hikers, stock users and OHV riders of all ages. Senior citizens and other volunteers are providing campground host services to ensure safe, enjoyable camping experiences. And volunteers are providing interpretive services and educational programs to enhance American's understanding of their natural environment. Through efforts such as these we can keep our Public Lands special places for all Americans to use and enjoy.

Public Lands are a national resource and a national treasure. The spirit of volunteers demonstrated on National Public Lands Day and the examples I've given of communities working to-

gether with resource professionals shows what can be done when we pull together. Working together on National Public Lands Day, and every day, will ensure that these lands are here for our enjoyment for generations to come.

A BAD AMENDMENT

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, this week Americans for Gun Safety, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence United with the Million Mom March, and Coalition to Stop Gun Violence have joined to oppose an amendment included in the House version of the Commerce, Justice, and State Department Appropriations Act that would cripple the ability of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives to enforce the Nation's gun safety laws against firearms dealers who supply guns to criminals.

The House amendment would prohibit the public release of information related to the importation and production of firearms. This would mean that the only reliable national information available on how many guns are produced in a given year, as well as type, caliber, and manufacturer, would no longer be available to the public. Further, the amendment would prohibit the public release of information related to multiple handgun sales. Under current law, dealers are required to notify the BATFE of the sale of two or more handguns to the same person within 5 business days. Eliminating the public availability of this data would make it more difficult to monitor the activities of reckless gun dealers. In addition, the amendment would prohibit the release of information related to tracing requests on guns used in crimes.

The amendment would also prohibit the BATFE from issuing a rule requiring Federal firearm licensees to submit to a physical inventory. A physical inventory recently revealed that a Tacoma, WA gun dealer could not account for the sniper rifle used by the Washington, DC area sniper and more than 200 other guns in his inventory. The amendment would also require the immediate destruction of records of approved firearms purchases and transfers generated by the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. The retention of these records has assisted law enforcement officials in trying to prevent guns from getting into the hands of criminals and identifying gun trafficking patterns.

This amendment was never the subject of hearings, is not supported by any major law enforcement organizations, is not supported by Attorney General John Ashcroft or Director of the BATFE Bradley Buckles.

I support the efforts of Americans for Gun Safety, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence United with the Million Mom March, and Coalition to Stop Gun Violence to block this amendment. This provision could